



For Immediate Release

Urbandale Middle School Teacher: 2014 Iowa Teacher Of The Year Finalist

Jon Parrott, Eighth Grade American History Teacher at Urbandale Middle School, selected as a finalist for the 2014 Iowa Teacher of the Year Award

URBANDALE, Iowa – October 20, 2013 – With over 26 years of outstanding contributions in teaching, leading and facilitating learning, Jon Parrott, Eighth Grade American History Teacher at Urbandale Middle School, received the prestigious honor of being selected as a finalist for the 2014 Iowa Teacher of the Year Award. By utilizing proven quality learning tools, Parrott encourages students to learn at their own pace and be accountable for their learning. Students not only learn the content of the American History course, but also learn how to learn, learn how to manage their time and learn how to effectively collaborate with other students; essential skills for success in college, business and life. [View a video of Parrott’s students](#) sharing how he has had a significant impact on both their learning and their lives: <http://youtu.be/lzT4YK0jEel>

Inspired by the work of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Parrott has become a champion of transforming education in the [Urbandale Community School District](#). He has revolutionized learning by redesigning his classroom into a learning system, focusing his role on the continual improvement of that system and providing the [highest quality learning experiences for his students](#).

“I’m honored to have been nominated for the 2014 Iowa Teacher of the Year Award and humbled by being selected as a finalist. Being a member of the UCSD means being a part of an organization that is truly forward-thinking as we seek continual, quality improvement for all learners,” said Parrott. “We strive to not only improve the class average but also shrink the gap between the most and least successful students. Quality work and quality learning are the goals for all staff and students. In Urbandale, we fully believe that quality is everyone’s responsibility.”



Jon Parrott, Urbandale Middle School, 2014 Iowa Teacher of the Year Finalist

Parrott’s impact goes well beyond his classroom as he has been instrumental in efforts to transform the entire district. He serves as a professional development leader at Urbandale Middle School as

well as at the district level, serves as a member of the district's social studies and technology committees and was selected this past year to pilot Chromebooks in his classroom.

"Jon Parrott epitomizes what it means to be a teacher of the highest quality," said Dr. Doug Stilwell, Superintendent, Urbandale Community School District. "He is able to translate theory into meaningful learning for his students, focusing not only on content, but also on helping students learn to learn, and learn to make meaningful choices. Jon truly prepares his students for what he calls the 'land of choices.' Fundamentally, he is the builder of young people."

In addition to this great honor, the [Association for Middle Level Education \(AMLE\)](#) has invited Parrott to present at the 40th Annual Conference for Middle Level Education, November 7-9, 2013, in Minneapolis, MN. With over 25,000 global members, the AMLE is the premier association for middle-level educators striving to reach every student, grow professionally and create great schools.

Parrott's presentation, "Differentiation in the Learner-centered Classroom" will focus on providing teachers with specific strategies to differentiate instruction rooted in an environment of learner-centeredness. Parrott will share insights about the use of Situational Leadership™ and capacity matrices as tactical means for providing students with greater ownership in their learning—[resulting in greater student achievement and success](#).

Parrott has been honored for his outstanding contributions in education with numerous awards and recognition, including being the recipient of the 2013 Urbandale Educator of the Year by the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce, the Governor's Scholar Recognition Program Favorite Teacher Certificate, Daughters of the American Revolution Outstanding Teacher of American History and two-time winner of the Extra Effort Award from the UCSD. Parrott presented at the 2012 Deming Institute Conference at Iowa State University, as well as at the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence Celebration through the [Iowa Quality Center](#). Urbandale students, parents, teachers, administrators, board members and community members congratulate Jon Parrott on this well-deserved honor.

About the Iowa Teacher of the Year Award

The Iowa Teacher of the Year award was established in 1958. The annual program is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education through an appropriation from the Iowa Legislature. Honorees serve as ambassadors to education and act as liaisons to primary and secondary schools, higher education and organizations across the state. To learn more, visit: www.educateiowa.gov

About the Association for Middle Level Education

The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) is the premier association helping middle grades educators reach every student, grow professionally, and create great schools. With more than 25,000 members who are principals, teachers, central office personnel, professors, college students, parents, community leaders, and educational consultants around the globe, AMLE offers information, resources, and professional development to middle grades educators working to

develop more effective schools that focus on the success of every student aged 10–15. To learn more, visit: www.amle.org

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About the Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The district serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale district supports an increasingly diverse student population where 50 languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the district. By implementing innovative [Quality/Continual Improvement](#) tools and tactics that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming lifelong learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: www.urbandaleschools.com

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